

Institutionalizing Community Health Conference



27-30 March 2017 | Johannesburg, South Africa



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Citizen-led Advocacy for Accountability in Health: Championing Social Accountability for RMNCAH

Institutionalizing Community Health
Conference

March 27th- 30th Johannesburg South Africa

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Why citizen-led accountability?



When citizens are well-informed, they can, through their voice, demand and hold leaders accountable with positive results



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“Act Now to Save Mothers” Campaign

**Citizen-led Accountability
Campaign**



Holds the government of Uganda accountable to a commitment made to *Every Woman Every Child* to provide life-saving emergency care to pregnant women and newborns



Critical elements of our approach

Mobilizing
Communities to
know their rights

Amplifying
demand for
accountability

Supporting
policy makers
to respond



Impact

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Before	After
Lack of life-saving commodities at health facilities	Improvement in the procurement of life-saving commodities and supplies In 2015, an evaluation of WRA Uganda's campaign found that essential medicines are available at unprecedented levels in all sub-country and county health centers
Severe understaffing and lack of skilled health workers	Recruitment of an additional 133 health workers 7 doctors recruited in Kabale which had none of the 14 doctors needed
Poor infrastructure including lack of running water, power outages	13 staff houses were constructed to ensure the availability of staff, especially midwives, at all hours Health centre and theatres were build or renovated, connected to electricity and water



Impact contd

“I’m grateful the community already knows what is needed. Previously, they were dying innocently. They didn’t know government had got to do certain things for them, but now the citizens have raised their own voices, they are saying we need this and that”



*Hon. Atim Joy Ongom
Member of Parliament, Lira District*



Impact contd



*Mr. Odongo Toby, Chairperson
Ogur Sub-county*

"I am happy the Act Now To Save Mothers Campaign has led to allocation of funds this financial year to renovate and functionalize our operating theater at Ogur health centre IV. We've also got a Senior Medical Officer. This will reduce referrals of pregnant women to Lira regional referral hospital."



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Utilizing hearings to raise citizens voices



Social accountability tool

Brings together a wide range of stakeholders to discuss pertinent issues

Breaks down different barriers

Facilitates evidence-based, solution-oriented discussions



Citizens' Hearings: How we started

- RMNCAH partners: International Planned Parenthood Federation, Save the Children, White Ribbon Alliance and World Vision International working together
- Promoting citizen-led accountability through citizens' hearings
- In Uganda, CSOs convened to set national SDG priorities identified health as a priority



Citizens Hearing multi-level approach

- Community & District
- National
- International
- 25 + countries





Outcomes of citizens hearings

- The Prime Minister of Uganda pledged to increase funding for health centres
- Malawi MP committed to leading citizens in persuading government to deliver on its commitments
- Sierra Leone's hearing assessed progress made towards MDGs, impact of Ebola outbreak on this achievement and how to better prepare in case of another outbreak
- Community leaders committed to integrate social accountability in government programs



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Citizens' Recommendations Handed Over to UN Secretary General





Lessons Learnt

- Citizens want to be part of the decisions that affect their health
- Engage multiple stakeholders
- Evidence-based & bottom-up approach
- Amplify citizens voices



Lessons Learnt

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- Feedback to citizens
- Testimonies drive message home
- Important to support decision makers
- First hand information
- Partnerships are key



Challenges and Solutions

Mindset change takes a long time	Plan for sustained engagement
Lack of readily available health performance data	WRA Uganda was been able to use the data generated by campaign to discover gaps the magnitude of which the government itself did not know
Sustaining the campaign momentum is costly	Having local champions and mobilizing volunteer members helped the campaign to manage some of the costs



Challenges and Solutions

Weak mechanisms for ensuring feedback loop to the citizens

CSOs need to be accountable and provide feedback

Sometimes governments send people who can't make commitments

Arrange meetings with decision makers and hand over recommendations

Blame game – citizens vs. government

Identify gaps and support leaders to fill them

Representation: sometimes there are more leaders than actual citizens

Ensure proper representation for meaningful engagement



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Sustainability

Citizen reporter advocates continue to monitor and track progress on RMNCAH in their localities

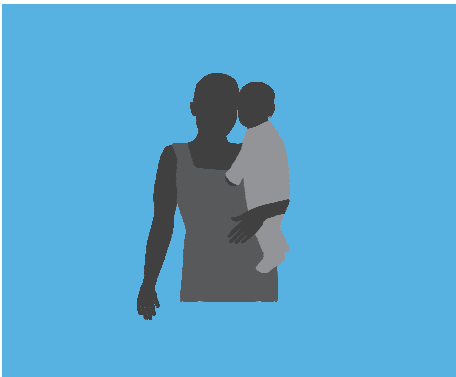




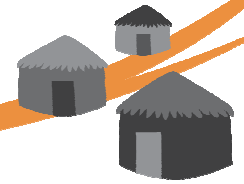
Thank You

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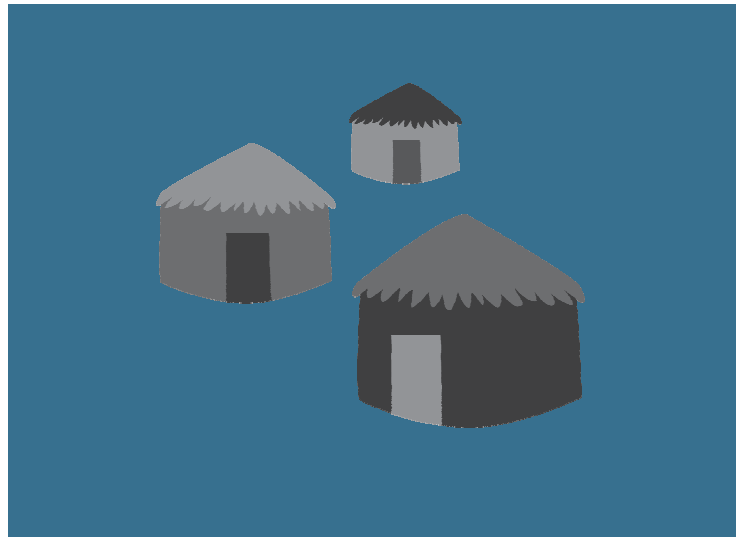




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